



# INTERNATIONAL VISITOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/ivp/>



## Intro to IVLP

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs funds and administers the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), one of its premier professional exchange programs. The IVLP is designed to build mutual understanding between the U.S. and other countries through carefully designed visits that reflect the participants' professional interests and support U.S. foreign policy goals. Participants are established or potential foreign opinion makers in government, public policy, media, education, labor, the arts, and other key fields. Selected by American embassies abroad, International Visitors come to the United States to meet and confer with their professional counterparts and to gain an appreciation of the ethnic, cultural, political, and socio-economic diversity of the U.S. In fiscal year 2005, over 4,000 International Visitors participated in the program; 798 of those came at their own or their government's expense.

The IVLP is carried out through close collaboration with 8 non-profit program agencies in Washington, D.C. and 94 community-based organizations across the U.S., whose members arrange professional meetings, cultural activities and home hospitality for the visitors. These organizations are members of the National Council for International Visitors

## IVLP SNAPSHOT

- A typical IVLP project is three weeks in length, and includes visits to four U.S. cities. IVLP participants meet with professional counterparts and visit U.S. public and private sector organizations and related to the project theme. In addition, IVs are often hosted by American families and participate in cultural activities.
- As an example, a recent program introduced 17 visitors from the Near East and North Africa to the American political process and U.S. Elections. In Washington DC, New York City, Milwaukee, Portland and Philadelphia, the participants met with academics, legislators, journalists and politicians; they also observed a state primary and visited the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia.
- Over 135,000 International Visitors have participated in the program since its inception in 1940.
- At any given point during the year, approximately 250 IVs are on projects in the United States. In 2005, over 4,000 IVs participated in 1,003 projects on themes such as:
 

• Counter-terrorism	• International Crime and Drug Prevention
• Combating HIV/AIDS	• NGO Management
• Civic Education	• Religious Tolerance
• Foreign Policy	• Broadcast/Print Journalism
• Democracy and Rule of Law	

(<http://www.nciv.org/>) Tens of thousands of Americans volunteer their time and expertise to strengthening relations between the United States and other countries through the International Visitor Leadership Program.

## Alumni

Among IVLP alumni are over 200 current and former Heads of Government or Chiefs-of-State, 33 currently serving in this capacity. Alumni include:

- President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan (1987)
- President Mikhail Saakashvili of Georgia ('99)
- Former Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany ('81)
- President Kurmanbek Bakiev of Kyrgyzstan ('04)
- President Mwai Kibaki of Kenya ('99)
- Dr. Adnan Badran, Prime Minister of Jordan ('77)
- President Ricardo Lagos of Chile ('88)

## Educational and Cultural Programs

The International Visitor Leadership Program exchanges are among more than 30,000 annual exchanges managed by the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Other academic and professional exchange programs include the Fulbright Program and the Citizen Exchange Programs. For further information, go to [www.exchanges.state.gov](http://www.exchanges.state.gov).

*"The IVL Program offers priceless opportunities to understand the United States and the American people through direct experience, and to make valuable contacts...I am immensely grateful for the insights into the U.S. which this exchange scheme provided. I have drawn on them regularly since then."*

— Tony Blair, British Prime Minister

